



Delivering Co-operative Priorities in Government

Since the 2024 election, the Co-operative Party Parliamentary Group and its National Officers have worked hard together to begin to deliver upon the Government's world-leading commitments to co-operatives and mutuals.

Ahead of the election, the Co-operative Party won commitments on priorities including:

- Working to **double the size of the co-operative and mutual sector**. This included ensuring the country becomes 'pro co-operative' and combatting the lack of adequate legislation, education, regulation, access to finance and development support for alternative business model.
- Introducing a huge and rapid uplift in **community-owned renewable energy** generation via the Local Power Plan.
- Focusing on **community empowerment and ownership** through the introduction of a new Community Right to Buy and localism powers.
- Introducing new measures to **better protect retail workers from violence and abuse**.

This was not the limit of the Party's ambitions. The Party fundamentally believes in the power of co-operatives and co-operation to build a better, fairer country – in every sector of the economy and society.

The below document details of the work and wins which have been made in pursuit of these aims in the first two years of the Parliament. It does not capture the full work of the Party, but rather just focuses on its Government delivery, grouped by Government Department.



Treasury (HMT)

Treasury Ministers including the Chancellor have ensured a high profile for co-operative and mutual growth since the election, including featuring co-operative growth in set piece and high-profile fiscal events – such as first-ever mentions of co-operatives in both the 2024 Mansion House speech and 2025 Budget Speech. We have also delivered:

1. **Government support and engagement with the first ever Co-operative and Mutual Sector Business-led Growth Council.** This has led to detailed growth plans being established by all areas of the co-operative and mutual sectors including: credit unions, financial mutuals, co-operatives and Building Societies. This has united the movement and ensured that it able to have a more direct impact with Government.
2. **The establishment of a co-operative and mutual Centre of Excellence within the major UK Regulators (Financial Conduct Authority and Prudential Regulation Authority).** This will help tackle a sectoral problem that regulators are too often unsighted and unwilling to understand the specific needs of co-operatives and mutuals.
3. **Package of measures from Regulators to better support the growth of Building Societies.** This work was included in a major report which was requested by Government to be laid before Parliament.
4. The Government facilitated measures to ensure that **it is now quicker and easier to set up a co-operative** than it was pre-election. This has long been a source of frustration for those seeking to set up co-operatives.
5. Credit unions increase financial inclusion and provide their members more affordable credit. **The Treasury have reformed measures which held back their growth, specifically on their restrictions in relation to the ‘common bond’.** This was a mechanism which limited the numbers of people who can be a member of individual credit unions.

Department for Business and Trade (DBT)

6. Growth Hubs are local business support centers in England that provide tailored advice, resources, and funding opportunities to help businesses start, grow, and scale. **Funding for Growth Hubs is now contingent on them offering co-operative and alternative business model advice.**
7. **The Department for Business and Trade have committed to update the curriculum of the Help To Grow Management programme to include co-operatives.** This Government-funded programme is provided to support the next generation of SME business leaders.
8. **The Department for Business and Trade have launched what the movement has described as an ‘historic’ consultation on the development needs of co-operatives and mutuals.** Following strong co-operative movement response, the consultation has now closed with results to follow.
9. It has been a longstanding complaint of the movement that there was no standard Government information on www.gov.uk about how to start a co-operative. This has now been corrected, and **information on how to start a co-operative is now on gov.uk.**



10. Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) seek provide SME lending to types of business locked out of traditional investment. Some CDFIs are mutuals themselves, and they often support community business. **The Government have supported CDFIs with a massive investment via the Enable Funding scheme worth £1bn and a CDFI Taskforce has been launched.**
11. The Department for Business and Trade have started to correct the lack of officials support for co-operatives and mutuals with some limited **Civil Servant recruitment within a new co-operative and mutuals team.**

Ministry Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

12. **Within the Department's Pride In Place strategy, the Department has committed to the establishment of a new 'Co-operative Development Unit'.**
13. **Within the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, a new 'Community Right to Buy' has been established.** This will ensure that communities have the first right of refusal when a registered 'community assets' are put up for sale at an independently evaluated cost.
14. Within the same piece of legislation, **there are now stronger protections for local sporting assets which are threatened with closure or sale.**
15. **The Pride In Place programme and strategy aims to provide powers and funding to many communities across the country with a focus on community empowerment , ownership and cohesion.** This £6bn programme is one which the Party has worked closely with Government on through its development and launch. Also **within this strategy is much needed support for Social Clubs**, which has been a key aspect of the Party's 'Community Britain' campaigning.
16. We have long called for reform to housing tenure, to move our country beyond the current landlord or tenant model. Commonhold tenure provides a mechanism for joint ownership of housing without leaving the owners vulnerable to undue leasehold costs. This **Commonhold tenure is now the default for new housing, and reforms have made it easier for existing housing to be transferred into Commonhold.**
17. **A £25 million funding pot has been established for community-led housing funding, for new schemes, development and exploration.**

Department for Energy Climate Change and Net Zero (DESNZ)

18. **The single biggest commitment any Government has made to community ownership has been made within our energy production market. The Local Power plan, worth £1bn, is the country's largest ever investment in the rapid development of hundreds of new community-owned renewable energy schemes across the country. It provides funding, expertise and development support so communities can own their own energy generation.**

Department for Education and Skills (DfES)

19. **Regional care procuring co-ops pilots have been launched in England.** These co-operatives allow local authorities to work together to achieve fairer outcomes with care procurement from the private sector.
20. **The Schools White Paper committed to very strong support for Co-operative Schools.** The Department committed to work with the sector to update the model and provide a strong offer for schools in England, both Primary and Secondary, to benefit from co-operative governance and working.

Home Affairs

21. **The protections for retail workers from violence and abuse that the Party has long campaigned have been legislated for in England and Wales.** This should improve the chances of police action and serve as a more powerful deterrent from these crimes.

FCDO

22. **The UK Government is now including co-operative development within its approach to international development.** This has been demonstrated by Ministerial contributions in UN and other international conferences.

